THE SURPRISING WONDER OF Doctor Watts,

WHO

Lay in a TRANCE Three Days.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

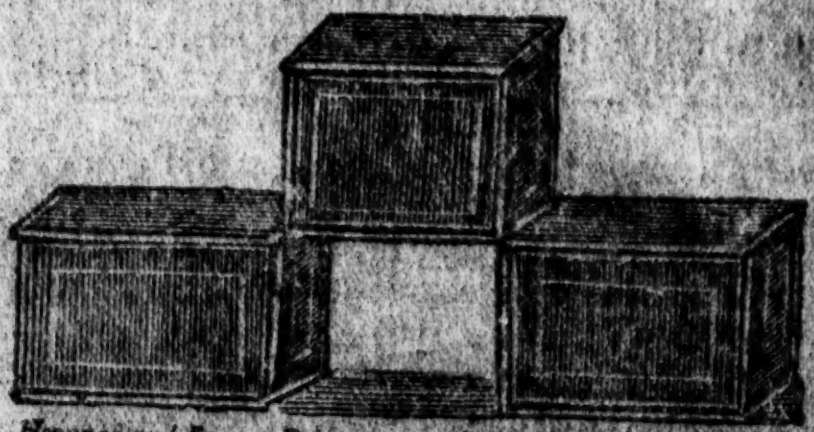
A SERMON,

Preached at his intended FUNERAL,

From the 2d of Timothy.—"*I have fought a good fight, and have finished my course.*"

ALSO,

A SERMON which he preached himself, the Sunday after he recovered from the Trance, to those who were invited to the Funeral.



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THE

Surprising Wonder, &c.

IN the parish of St. Clement, Oxford, Mr. Henry Watts, a Minister, being a worthy and devout gentlemen, taking every week extraordinary pains in instructing his parishoners, going from house to house to confirm them in their christian faith and principles; and where he found any in great necessity, he would not only relieve them to the utmost of his abilities, but would promote and put forward weekly contributions, often preaching upon the christian and divine subject of charity. And indeed he was the wonder of those parts, by his practising that heavenly duty. Those good offices he has from time to time performed, since he has been minister of that place, which was near twelve years.

But how great the grief of his parishioners, especially the poorer sort, when he fell into a swoon, and dropped from his chair, to the surprize of all present. They gave him comfortable cordials, but to no effect. So his friends finding him breathless, prepared for his funeral, which was appointed to be on the third day after his supposed death, being in his coffin, and without any appearance of life; nay, he was even cold.

The third day being come, the Rev. Mr. Wilkinson was made choice of to preach the funeral sermon, the substance of which was as follows, viz.

2 Tim. v. 7, "*I have fought a good fight, and have finished my course.*"

BELOVED FRIENDS AND CHRISTIANS,

I HAVE no need to give you the character of our departed brother and fellow-labourer in the LORD: His parts, piety, and goodness were sufficiently known to all; the blessed effects of which, no doubt, but by this time, through the mercies of our SAVIOUR, make him shine among the elect in the kingdom of God. When living here, he was a lively pattern to imitate. His sickness, and uncommon patience under it, considering its violence may teach us submission under afflictions, his daily considering how sweet and easy God made it to him, may leave us comfort and consolation e-

gainſt that dreadful moment of our own, provided we trace him in all godly performances of his holy life. Which that we may do God of his infinite goodneſs endue us with grace, through the merits of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

Dr. Wilkinſon had no ſooner ended his ſermon, and was going towards the grave, to perform the uſual ceremonies, but to his, and all other people's ſurpriſe, a noiſe of groaning was heard in the coffin, juſt as they were putting it into the ground; whereupon it was opened, and to the aſtoniſhment of all, Mr. Watts riſing up, faintly bid them not to be afraid; being carried home, and put in a warm bed, and receiving ſome comfortable things, he recovered, and ſitting up in bed he related to the ſtanders by what he had ſeen, in the manner following.

As ſoon as my ſoul was ſeparated from this lump of clay, all my ſins were expoſed to me, ſeeming as if engraved on a marble table, in crimſon letters, the ſcroll was very large, and every tittle of them being brought freſh to my mind, it cauſed me almoſt to deſpair. When at that very inſtant an angel preſented me with a white and pleaſant ſcroll, in which my holy prayers and charitable acts were written in letters of gold, which out-ſhined

my faults, and brought joy to my ſoul. So waiting and expecting of my ſentence, this heavenly perſon bid me return and declare to the world as follows:

There ſhall be great ſigns and viſions which ſhall be ſhewn from Heaven to teſtify the Lord's coming at hand, to judge the world in righteouſneſs; this will be a year of great wars and bloodſhed among the armies abroad, and two great towns will be taken, after an obſtinate and bloody reſiſtance; after which a bloody battle will be fought, which will then be moſt terrible. And in the end will be a peace; there ſhall be no more claſhing of ſwords, noiſe of great guns, or dying of ſoldiers. After this ſhall be a year of great ſickneſs, which will happen in the kingdom; the ſmall-pox, fevers, and agues will prove fatal. And there ſhall be many ſigns ſeen in the air, of armies fighting, and very great earthquakes in Spain and Italy, which do great damage; and great confuſion will happen in the falling of a ſhower of blood in Conſtantinople: many Turks will be converted to the chriſtian faith.

Thus, my friends, I have delivered to you what I have ſeen and heard, faithfully. Upon which Mrs. Watts, his ſiſter, aſked him if he could give any certain teſtimony for human ſatisfaction of his being in another world.

He replied, Yes, dear ſiſter, I can, and therefore deſired to ſpeak with her in private; when he told her of many ſins, which ſhe confeſſed with tears, no one knew but God and herſelf.

Upon this ſtrange rumour, many ungodly perſons came by way of deriſion to know whether he could reveal their ſins or not? who no ſooner approached him, but he recited to them the actions of their paſt lives, to their aſtoniſhment, repentance, and converſion.

He having recieved his ſtrength, the next Sunday he gave notice to thoſe who were at his intended funeral to be at church, when he preached the following diſcourſe.

Dr. Watts' Sermon.

JOHN XI. vi. 25.

"I am the Reſurrection and the Life, ſaith the Lord; he who believeth in me, though he were dead, yet he ſhall live, and whoſoever liveth and believeth in me, ſhall never die."

THESE words of our Saviour were ſpoken in anſwer to Martha, who ſeemed to doubt, of the literal meaning and ſignification thereof; for it was when Lazarus had been dead four days and

ſhe was ſo grounded in her human opinion, that ſhe thought it impoſſible for Chriſt to raiſe him again, as appeared by her repeated arguments or contradictions, ſaying, My Lord, by this time he ſtinketh, for he hath been dead four days. But, ſaid our Saviour, verſe 40. "Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldeſt believe, thou ſhalt ſee the glory of God." Indeed Martha, ſeemed to think if Chriſt had been with Lazarus when alive; he would immediately have healed his diſorder; but being dead, ſhe, with Mary concluded it neceſſary to hope for his reſurrection. Read the whole chapter at your leiſure, and obſerve how miraculouſly Lazarus was raiſed to life, after he had been dead four days.

Beloved, God's arm is not ſhortened; his powe is not leſſened; that wonderful and ſtrange miracles might convince obſtinate unbelievers. I am in hopes this unſpeakable Providence vouchſafed to me, was appointed for ſome great end, in order to reſtrain ſuch ſtubborn people; however, by this eminent diſpenſation, we may, as in a glaſs, view the unbounded mercies of God, who ſent me back again upon a great and mighty errand, and that in an extraordinary manner, thereby to make his power and greatneſs unqueſtionable; and that vain and impious men may have no matter of argument to withſtand the truth of the goſpel.

I am heartily glad I am accounted worthy to bear teſtimony of the exceeding goodneſs as well

as infinite power of our Creator, and will not only be a means to strengthen your faith, but confirm and support it, and that under the greatest difficulties that any human disaster may occasion.

I have many other things to add, but being rather faint by reason of my indispoſition, I ſhall refer the proſecution of this ſubject to the next opportunity God is pleaſed to afford me; to whoſe protection I earneſtly recommend you all: AMEN.

FINIS.